Amendments to the Claims

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

1. (Previously presented) An $NHR_1R_2R_3^+$ salt of omeprazole, wherein:

R_1 is a linear or branched C_1-C_{12}-alkyl group, or a cyclic C_3-C_{12}-alkyl group, wherein the linear or branched C_1-C_{12} alkyl group is optionally substituted or interrupted with a substituent selected from the group consisting of a cyclic C_3-C_6-alkyl group, a cyclic C_3-C_6-alkylene group, a phenyl group, and a phenylene group, and wherein the cyclic C_3-C_6-alkyl group, the cyclic C_3-C_6-alkylene group, the phenyl group, or the phenylene group is optionally further substituted by 0, 1, 2, or 3 methyl groups; and

R_2 and R_3 are hydrogen.

2. (Previously presented) The $NHR_1R_2R_3^+$ salt of omeprazole according to claim 1, wherein R_1 is a linear or branched C_1–C_6 -alkyl group, or a cyclic C_3--C_6-alkyl group, wherein the linear or branched C_1- C_6-alkyl group is optionally substituted or interrupted with a substituent selected from the group consisting of a cyclic C_3-C_5-alkyl group, a cyclic C_3-C_5-alkylene group, a phenyl group, or a phenylene group, and wherein the cyclic C_3-C_5-alkyl group, the cyclic C_3-C_5-alkylene group, the phenyl group, or the phenylene group is optionally further substituted by 0, 1, 2, or 3 methyl groups.

3. (Previously presented) The $NHR_1R_2R_3^+$ salt of omeprazole according to claim 1, wherein R_1 is a linear, branched, or cyclic C_4-alkyl group, wherein the linear or branched C_4-alkyl group is optionally substituted or interrupted with a cyclic C_3-alkyl group or a cyclic C_3-alkylene group, and wherein the cyclic C_3-alkyl group or the cyclic C_3-alkylene group is further substituted by 0, 1, 2, or 3 methyl groups.

4. (Previously presented) The $NHR_1R_2R_3^+$ salt of omeprazole according to claim 1, wherein the salt has a pKa value equal to or greater than about 10.

5. (Previously presented) The $NHR_1R_2R_3^+$ salt of omeprazole according to claim 1, wherein the salt has a pKa value equal to or greater than about 10.5.

6. (Canceled)

7. (Canceled).

8. (Previously presented) The $NHR_1R_2R_3^+$ salt of omeprazole according to claim 1, wherein the salt is the *tert*-butylammonium salt of omeprazole.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Previously presented) The $NHR_1R_2R_3^+$ salt of omeprazole according to claim 1, wherein the salt is crystalline.

11. (Previously presented) A process for preparation of an $NHR_1R_2R_3^+$ salt of omeprazole according to any one of claims 1-5, 8, or 10, which comprises the steps of:

a) dissolving omeprazole in an organic solvent;

b) adding an $NR_1R_2R_3$ -compound and precipitating the desired salt; and

c) isolating and drying the obtained salt of omeprazole.

12. (Previously presented) The process according to claim 11, wherein the organic solvent is acetonitrile or *tert*-butyl methyl ether.

13. (Canceled)

14. (Canceled)

15. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition comprising the $NHR_1R_2R_3^+$ salt of omeprazole according to any one of claims 1-5, 8, or 10 as active ingredient in association with pharmaceutically acceptable excipients [and optionally one or more additional therapeutic ingredients].

16. (Canceled)

17. (Currently amended) A method for **inhibiting** [the treatment of a] gastric acid **secretion** [related condition] comprising administering to a patient suffering from the condition a therapeutically effective amount of the $NHR_1R_2R_3^+$ salt according to any one of claims 1-5, 8, or 10.

18. (Previously presented) An $NHR_1R_2R_3^+$ salt of esomeprazole, wherein:

R_1 is a linear or branched C_1-C_{12}-alkyl group, or a cyclic C_3-C_{12}-alkyl group, wherein the linear or branched C_1-C_{12} alkyl group is optionally substituted or interrupted with a substituent selected from the group consisting of a cyclic C_3-C_6-alkyl group, a cyclic C_3-C_6-alkylene group, a phenyl group, and a phenylene group, and wherein the cyclic C_3-C_6-alkyl group, the cyclic C_3-C_6-alkylene group, the phenyl group, or the phenylene group is optionally further substituted by 0, 1, 2, or 3 methyl groups; and

R_2 and R_3 are hydrogen.

19. (Previously presented) The $NHR_1R_2R_3^+$ salt of esomeprazole according to claim 18, wherein R_1 is a linear or branched C_1–C_6 -alkyl group or a cyclic C_3–C_6 -alkyl group, wherein the linear or branched C_1–C_6 alkyl group is optionally substituted or interrupted with a substituent selected from the group consisting of a cyclic C_3-C_5-alkyl group, a cyclic C_3-C_5-alkylene group, a phenyl group, or a phenylene group, and wherein the cyclic C_3-C_5-alkyl group,

the cyclic C_3-C_5-alkylene group, the phenyl group, or the phenylene group is optionally further substituted by 0, 1, 2, or 3 methyl groups.

20. (Previously presented) The $NHR_1R_2R_3^+$ salt of esomeprazole according to claim 18, wherein R_1 is a linear, branched, or cyclic C_4-alkyl group, wherein the linear or branched C_4-alkyl group is optionally substituted or interrupted with a cyclic C_3-alkyl group or a cyclic C_3-alkylene group, and wherein the cyclic C_3-alkyl group or the cyclic C_3-alkylene group is further substituted by 0, 1, 2, or 3 methyl groups.

21. (Previously presented) The $NHR_1R_2R_3^+$ salt of esomeprazole according to claim 18, wherein the salt has a pKa value equal to or greater than about 10.

22. (Previously presented) The $NHR_1R_2R_3^+$ salt of esomeprazole according to claim 18, wherein the salt has a pKa value equal to or greater than about 10.5.

23. (Previously presented) The $NHR_1R_2R_3^+$ salt of esomeprazole according to claim 18, wherein the salt is the *tert*-butylammonium salt of esomeprazole.

24. (Previously presented) The $NHR_1R_2R_3^+$ salt of esomeprazole according to claim 18, wherein the salt is crystalline.

25. (Previously presented) A process for preparation of an $NHR_1R_2R_3^+$ salt of esomeprazole according to any one of claims 18-24, which comprises the steps of:

a) dissolving esomeprazole in an organic solvent;

b) adding an $NR_1R_2R_3$ -compound and precipitating the desired salt; and

c) isolating and drying the obtained salt of esomeprazole.

26. (Previously presented) The process according to claim 25, wherein the organic solvent is acetonitrile or *tert*-butyl methyl ether.

27. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition comprising the $NHR_1R_2R_3^+$ salt of esomeprazole according to any one of claims 18-24 as active ingredient in association with pharmaceutically acceptable excipients [and optionally one or more additional therapeutic ingredients].

28. (Currently amended) A method for **inhibiting** [the treatment of a] gastric acid **secretion** [related condition] comprising administering to a patient suffering from the condition a therapeutically effective amount of the $NHR_1R_2R_3^+$ salt according to any one of claims 18-24.

29. (New) The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 15 or 27 further comprising one or more additional therapeutic ingredients.